

roles in these organizations, Mother Ruth has continued the fight for social justice and equality on numerous fronts, and inspired countless new leaders along the way.

Mother Ruth Villia Jones has been awarded recognition and praise for her activism on many occasions, including being named one of the 2003 Eternal Voices of the Oakland African Museum, the 1984 Ella Hill Hutch Award, the 1980 Glide Community Award, and many others.

Mother Ruth Villia Jones has been a loving sister, mother, wife, a proud grandmother and great grandmother, a friend to many and a "Mother" to us all. On this very special occasion, Oakland and the entire Bay Area community comes together to celebrate Mother Ruth Villia Jones' 100th birthday and honor her for a lifetime of pursuing peace and fighting for social justice. I am honored to add my voice, on behalf of California's 9th U.S. Congressional District, all those gathered here today to thank and salute Mother Ruth for her immeasurable contributions to her community, our country, and our world.

**SUBMISSION OF TEXAS SENATE
RESOLUTION 9, URGING THE U.S.
CONGRESS, TO ADDRESS PROBLEMS
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS**

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2006

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in an effort to bring attention to the insufficient policies that this nation has levied toward our veterans. The great sacrifices made by our military personnel should be acknowledged, at the very least, through a secure retirement. Yet time and again, the rhetoric presented by Members of Congress does not match the policies that are created.

It is imperative that we address the needs of veterans through real proposals that will be flexible and hold up against the course of time, as opposed to short-term fixes. I believe that we can provide military retirees with the degree of support that is reasonable in light of the sacrifices that they have made in service to this nation.

This belief is reflected in a measure adopted by the Texas State Senate on May 15, 2006. Texas Senate Resolution No. 9 (S.R. 9), which was authored by Texas State Senator Leticia Van de Putte, urges Congress to address problems in the Department of Veterans Affairs and to enact legislation that assures predictable and adequate funding of the Veterans Health Administration.

I would like to submit the text of S.R. 9 to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that we in the Federal Government might be reminded of our duty to provide appropriate services to the men and women of our military who have served our nation so proudly. I am hopeful that we can make the needs of veterans a greater priority and that we will thusly adopt policies that recognize the profound commitment and steadfast courage our military personnel demonstrate every day.

TEXAS SENATE RESOLUTION No. 9

Whereas, military veterans who have served their country honorably and who were

promised and have earned health care and benefits from the Federal Government through the Department of Veterans Affairs are now in need of these benefits; and

Whereas, the funding of the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs has failed to reflect the admission of newly eligible veterans in the wake of the Veterans' Health Care Eligibility Reform Act of 1996 and has fallen short of the amount needed to counter soaring medical care inflation, resulting in a funding shortfall of at least \$10 billion; and

Whereas, the current discretionary method of funding the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration is uncertain and is subject annually to the whims and competing priorities of Congress, to the detriment of the veterans being served; and

Whereas, the Vietnam Veterans of America organization supports the adoption of a new funding mechanism for the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration that is indexed to medical inflation and the per capita use of the administration's health care system; and

Whereas, the substantial delay in adjudicating veterans' claims for service-connected disability compensation is the cause of much anguish and anger among veterans and is the result of a lack of funding of the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, which has led to an insufficient number of adjudicators and the inadequate training and supervision of adjudicators; and

Whereas, while the vast majority of Department of Veterans Affairs employees are dedicated to serving veterans, it is necessary to ensure that employee accountability standards be strengthened at senior and junior levels; and

Whereas, while more than five million veterans use the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs for their health care needs, tens of thousands more are eligible for benefits of which they are unaware due to inadequate outreach efforts by the department; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 79th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to address problems in the Department of Veterans Affairs related to the provision of health care and benefits, the adjudication of claims, accountability, and outreach and to enact legislation that creates an appropriation formula that ensures predictable and adequate funding of the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate forward official copies of this Resolution to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the President of the United States, the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, and all members of the Texas delegation to the Congress with the request that this Resolution be officially entered in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

**HONORING PUBLIC DEFENDER
JAMES J. STEINBERG, HUM-
BOLDT COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2006

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Humboldt County

Public Defender James J. Steinberg on the occasion of his retirement after nearly 30 years of service to the people of Humboldt County.

James Steinberg began his public service career as a Humboldt County Deputy Public Defender in 1977, shortly after graduating from the University of California Hastings School of Law in 1976. Promoted to Assistant Public Defender in 1989, Mr. Steinberg was then appointed as Public Defender in 1997. During this period, he represented well over 15,000 clients, including Three Strikes and death penalty cases.

In addition to his dedicated performance in the Public Defenders office, Mr. Steinberg has served as the Humboldt County Bar Association President and the President of the Board of Trustees for the Humboldt County Law Library. Mr. Steinberg has also been a member of the North-Coast Co-op Board of Directors, the City of Arcata Budget Advisory Committee, and as a lecturer and instructor at both Humboldt State University and College of the Redwoods. Mr. Steinberg is a founding member of the Teen Court, which conducts trials by peers for first-time juvenile offenders, giving young people a hands-on experience in how our justice system works.

Mr. Steinberg was recognized in 1997 as the Democrat of the Year by the Humboldt County Democratic Central Committee. He graciously accepted the award in an unforgettable address, delivered in rhymed verse. Mr. Steinberg is well-known and highly regarded by his colleagues for his patience, leadership, quick wit, superior intelligence and steadfast commitment to public service.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we recognize Public Defender James J. Steinberg for his valuable service over three decades to the people of California, and extend our best wishes to him on the occasion of his retirement.

**HONORING JOHN F. "RICKY"
GOODRICH**

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2006

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment today to honor CW5 John F. "Ricky" Goodrich of the Tennessee Army National Guard.

Recently, Chief Goodrich celebrated his 60th birthday at the Ali al-Salem Airbase in Kuwait while serving there with the Guard's Operational Support Airlift Detachment 25. While he may be far from home, we're thinking of him and wishing him well as he works to defend America's national security.

This is not the first birthday Ricky Goodrich has spent away from home while serving his county though. Nearly 40 years ago, Chief Goodrich spent his 22nd birthday as a young soldier in Vietnam.

Chief Goodrich, the command chief warrant officer of the Tennessee Army National Guard, volunteered for this most recent deployment. And in addition to his administrative responsibilities, he routinely flies his C-12 aircraft into Iraq and Afghanistan.

I would not only like to extend our birthday wishes, but also thank him for his years of exceptional service to the United States Army